

## Message Text

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LAGOS FOR VOA ROBERTS

400 BLACK AMERICANS END FRATERNAL MEETING IN LIBERIA

MONROVIA, AUGUST 9 -- SOME 400 BLACK AMERICANS LEFT HERE TODAY AFTER FIVE DAYS OF MEETINGS WITH THEIR LIBERIAN HOSTS AT THE 70TH CONVENTION OF ALPHA PHI ALPHA FRATERNITY.

THEY WERE MEETING IN LIBERIA FOR THE SECOND PHASE OF THEIR ANNUAL CONVENTION TO UNDERScore THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION THEME: "1976 ALPHA'S INTERNATIONAL YEAR". THE TONE OF THE CONFERENCE WAS SET IN THE FIRST PHASE SESSION IN NEW YORK, JULY 30 - AUGUST 4, WHEN SPEAKERS ADDRESSED THEMSELVES TO THE NEED OF STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BLACK AMERICANS AND BLACK AFRICANS.

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER IN MONROVIA, DAVID HOWELL AN AMERICAN FRATERNITY MEMBER WHO HAS LIVED FOR A DECADE IN LIBERIA, CONTINUED THAT THEME OF STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS. HE CALLED UPON FRATERNITY MEMBERS TO DEVELOP CONSTRUCTIVE WORKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENTS OF AFRICA TO BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AND TO KEEP THEM.

HE CHALLENGED THE FRATERNITY TO THINK SERIOUSLY OF EXPANDING ITS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION TO INCLUDE MORE SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, TEACHING GRANTS, SPECIAL AWARDS TO AFRICAN STUDENTS AND SELECT INDIVIDUALS. HE CALLED FOR JOINT BUSINESS VENTURES  
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BETWEEN BLACK AMERICAN AND AFRICAN COMPANIES.

AND HE TOLD HIS FELLOW MEMBERS THEY SHOULD MAKE THEIR EXPERTISE, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE AVAILABLE TO AFRICA WHEN THEY RETIRE. FRATERNITY GENERAL PRESIDENT WALTER WASHINGTON, ALSO PRESIDENT OF ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY IN MISSISSIPPI, REPORTED THAT MEMBERS AGREED IN THEIR BUSINESS SESSIONS TO BEGIN PLANNING HOW THEY COULD FULFILL THOSE CHALLENGES.

MEMBERS ECHOED THAT DESIRE TO EXTEND FRIENDSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS FROM AMERICA TO AFRICA AS THEY DEPARTED MONROVIA, ABOUT HALF OF THEM RETURNING HOME AND THE OTHERS GOING ON TO THE IVORY COAST AND GHANA.

DURING THEIR STAY IN MONROVIA, THEY WERE ADDRESSED BY PRESIDENT WILLIAM R. TOLBERT, JR., WHO PRAISED THE FRATERNITY FOR ITS LONG HISTORY OF CONCERN FOR THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF THE OPPRESSED AND FOR ITS PROGRAMS OF ASSISTING OTHERS IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND IN EDUCATION.

THEY LAID A WREATH AT THE TOMB OF THE LATE PRESIDENT WILLIAM V.S. TUBMAN, A FORMER STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF THE FRATERNITY. A CHARTER WAS GRANTED A NEWLY FORMED COLLEGIATE CHAPTER COMPRISED OF MEMBERS FROM LIBERIAN UNIVERSITY AND CUTTINGTON COLLEGE.

THE FRATERNITY THUS SET ANOTHER FIRST FOR LIBERIA. THE CHAPTER IS THE FIRST COLLEGIATE ONE IN AFRICA. THE ALUMNI FRATERNITY CHAPTER IN MONROVIA, WHICH HOSTED THE CONVENTION, WAS THE FIRST CHAPTER TO BE FORMED IN AFRICA.

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